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S. E. ASIA
EASTERN

BRUNEI

1950
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CLOSED
UNTIL

1981

Correspondence with the Sultan

Previous

59721/49

E
1227

Subsequent

H 531	28/4
Mr Scott	11/5
Sir G. Whitelap.	1/5
MR. Higham	1/5
R Parker	1/5
H. 431.	3/5.
H 03	4/5
H 531.	4/5
Mr Scott	4/5

PUT BY 531.

CO 943/2/8

✓

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1 Brunei Dep 4 — 17. 4. 50.

Sir G. Whitely.

The HighCom's despatch at (1) details his proposals for concluding the matter of HH of Brunei's war-damage claims. — they are briefly set out at x of para 2 of (1).

2. In view of the amount HH would probably receive if the claim were considered along normal lines (\$5,000) the proposals are more than generous.

3. On the other hand, replacement of regalia will cost more than the sum originally estimated (\$10,000).

4. I think we should approve the HighCom's proposals and I have placed a DFA opposite to that effect.

M. Scott.

I agree that this seems a reasonable & just settlement in all the circumstances.

G.C. Whitely

1/5

9/11/5

J.F.P.
1/5
above

2 To Brunei - Dep No 9 - (1) and - 4 MAY 1950

R.

Put by M. Scott.
4/5

59721/50

BRUNEI

NO. 9

Colonial Office,

The Church House,

Great Smith Street,

S.W.1.

4th May, 1950.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your despatch No. 4 dated 17th April, 1950, on the subject of H.H. the Sultan of Brunei's claim for compensation for War Damage.

2. The proposal to offer His Highness a lump-sum payment of £40,000 in full settlement of all his claims for war-damage compensation and subject to the replacement of certain essential items of regalia, and the repayment of the loan of £10,000, is in my view far from ungenerous in view of the amount he would be likely to receive if his claim were dealt with along normal lines, and represents a very substantial measure of special consideration of his particular claim.

3. I agree however that the proposed arrangement appears just and reasonable in view of the unusual circumstances of the case, and, provided that the conditions attached to the payment of the lump-sum are adhered to, I agree that the matter may be conducted on the lines you propose. The increase in the stipends of His Highness and his family should mitigate any feeling that His Highness' war-damage claim has not received sympathetic treatment.

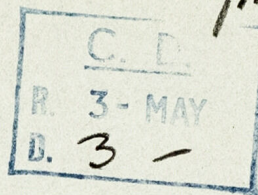
I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,
humble servant,

(Signed) J. GRIFFITHS.

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR BRUNEI.



C. O.

Mr. Scott. 1/5
Mr. Sir G. Whitely. 1/5
Mr. Higham. 1/5
Mr. Parkin. 1/5
Mr. _____

Permt. U.S. of S.
Parly. U.S. S.
Minister of State
Secretary of State

5/4

Your Reference _____

4 MAY 1950

DRAFT. Despatches.

High Commissioner,
Brunei.

No 9.

Sir,
I have etc. to
acknowledge receipt of your

- (1) despatch No. 4 dated 17th.
April 1950 on the subject
of H.H. the Sultan of Brunei's
claim for compensation for
war Damage.

The proposal to ~~offer~~ ^{offer} His

Highness a lump-sum

payment of \$40,000 subject
in full settlement
to the withdrawal of all

his claims for war-damage, ^{compensation}
+ subject to
the replacement of certain

essential items of regalia,
and the repayment of

the loan of \$10,000 is in my
view

~~extremely~~

FURTHER ACTION.

5

far from ungenerous
~~extremely generous~~ in view of a

the amount he would be likely
to ^{receive} ~~get~~ if his claim were dealt

with along normal lines, & represents a ^{very substantial} ~~moderate~~
measure of special consideration of his particular claim.

I agree however that

the proposed arrangement appears

just and reasonable in view of

the unusual circumstances of

the case, and ^{provided} ~~providing~~ that the

conditions attached to the payment

of the lump-sum are adhered

to I agree that the ^{matter} ~~case~~ may be

concluded on the ~~proposed~~ lines

you propose. The increase in

the stipends of His Highness and

his family should mitigate ~~and~~

any feeling that His Highness'

war-damage claim has not

received sympathetic treatment.

I etc.

(Signed) J. GRIFFITHS.



Telegraphic Address:—
"HIGHCOMA KUCHING"

Ref: 144/HCO/82

OFFICE OF HIS EXCELLENCY
THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR BRUNEI.

Kuching, Sarawak.

BRUNEI.

17 April, 1950.

No. 4

Sir,

5
49 —

I have the honour to refer to previous correspondence on the subject of H.H. the Sultan of Brunei's claim for compensation for War Damage concluding with Mr. Creech Jones' letter to him No. 59721/49 of the 5th of August, 1949, and to inform you that His Highness has again raised the question of a settlement of his claims. Earlier, he had asked for an advance of \$15,000 (to be repaid from the amount awarded to him as compensation for war losses) in order to purchase various items for his Silver Jubilee last year. The assessed value of His Highness's claims was considered likely to be very small, however, since a large proportion of them was in respect of items such as jewellery, for which compensation is not normally payable under the War Damage Compensation Scheme, and it was therefore decided to grant him an advance of \$10,000 but to seek repayment from His Highness's Privy Purse.

x 2. Although His Highness accepted this arrangement at the time, he subsequently sought its amendment by a reversion to the proposal that this loan should be repaid out of his award in compensation for war losses. It was felt that, in view of the unique status of His Highness the Sultan as Sovereign in Brunei and of the need for replacement of certain of the lost items, such as state regalia and crown jewellery, there was justification for the payment of an "arbitrary" sum to the Sultan in compensation for his losses. It was decided, after consultation with the British Resident, to offer His Highness a lump-sum payment of \$40,000 subject to his agreeing, in consideration thereof, to withdraw all his claims for war-damage and to give a formal undertaking to replace certain essential items of the lost regalia, such as the State crowns. The loan of \$10,000 made previously to His Highness was to be deducted from the lump-sum payment.

3. His Highness had submitted claims totalling \$64,630 but it was ascertained that certain items - for example, four motor cars - had been omitted and the admission of these would have brought the total to approximately \$80,000. As already stated, however, much of the total was made up of claims for jewellery and other normally inadmissible articles. It was felt, therefore, that the proposed solution of this problem was by no means ungenerous and, indeed, His Highness signified

/ his

The Right Honourable James Griffiths,
P.C., M.P., etc., etc.,
Colonial Office,
Church House,
Great Smith Street,
London, S.W.1.

his acceptance of it to the British Resident and asked for an immediate advance of a portion of the proposed "block" payment. He later, however, addressed the then High Commissioner with a view to securing a further modification of the proposals.

4. His Highness the Sultan has stated that he now considers the foregoing proposal inequitable since the amount it was suggested he should be paid is less than the total of his claims, whereas the \$10,000 advance to him to purchase regalia for the Jubilee celebrations is to be deducted in full from the payment. He contends that if he is to receive only a proportion of the sum he claimed, he should be required to repay that same proportion only of the expenditure on regalia, notably on the two crowns purchased for himself and his Consort. His Highness makes mention of the fact that his losses were incurred as a result of looting which occurred when the Allied attack on Brunei was mounted and after Allied forces had completed the initial re-occupation of Brunei, and asks that you give consideration to these points in deciding whether the proposed settlement is justifiable and should be adhered to in the circumstances.

5. While it is admitted that the circumstances of His Highness' case are rendered unusual by his special status, and that replacement of the lost regalia will involve greater expense than the original cost of these items or than the amount claimed in respect of them by His Highness, it is nevertheless my view, and that of the British Resident, that the proposed settlement represents a great measure of special consideration for His Highness, since it is calculated that, were his claims for compensation dealt with along normal lines under the War Damage Compensation Scheme, he would, for the reason already given, be unlikely to receive an award of much, if any, more than \$5,000. Moreover, there is no stipulation that any but the essential items of regalia should be replaced by His Highness. I should, however, be grateful for your confirmation that the proposed arrangement appears to you just and reasonable, in order that I may bring this matter to its conclusion.

6. The fact may be mentioned, as having some bearing upon the background of His Highness' complaints, that I have acceded to a suggestion by the British Resident that in view of the enhanced revenues of the State and the emoluments received by the Rulers of States in the Federation of Malaya, His Highness's "santapan" or stipend should be increased from \$3,500 a month to \$5,000 a month; his wife's (the Tengku Ampuan's) from \$425 to \$500 and his royal daughter's from \$100 to \$150. These

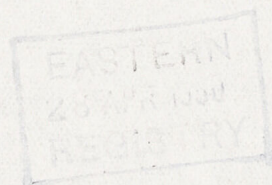
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increases, of which His Highness was unaware when putting forward the complaints which form the subject of this despatch, will be payable with effect from the beginning of this year, and it is to be hoped that this additional income may cause him to be less critical of his treatment in respect of war losses.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,

A. A. M.

High Commissioner
for Brunei.



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Correspondence with the Sultan. 1950. MS Records of the British Colonial Office CO 943/2/8. The National Archives (Kew, United Kingdom). State Papers Online Colonial, link.gale.com/apps/doc/MSYPYY041609501/SPOC?u=omni&sid=bookmark-SPOC&pg=1. Accessed 21 Dec. 2024.